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TEARS.

THE sea shone bright in the distance far,
Where the sun's last rays were thrown,
As we sate by the lonely fisherman's hut,
We sate all still and alone.

The mist hung dark—the waters swelled;
The sea-gull skimmed around;
While from thine eyes the trickling tears
Fell fast upon the ground.

I saw them falling on thy hand,
And to my knees I sank,
And from thy little lily hand
The scalding tears I drank.

Since then my body has burned in pain,
And languished my soul for years.
Alas! the wretched, artful girl
Has poisoned me with her tears!

—Heyne.

A VETERAN OF CLASSICAL MUSIC.

From the German.

ON the evening of November 26, 1846, the stairway of the Gewandhaus, at Leipzig, offered a singular spectacle. Before the still unopened doors of the hall, every step and landing of the stairway, two stories in height, was crowded with a dense throng of ladies and gentlemen—in great measure drawn from the first circles of the city—all longing for the moment when their waiting should end, and entry be allowed into the hall.

The subscription concerts of the Gewandhaus, at that time so celebrated, under Mendelssohn's leading, had not yet entirely lost their simplicity of form. They were instituted in March, 1743, by sixteen amateurs; and led by the originator of the plan, the bookseller, Gleditsch, they at first had the character of social family reunions. To such an extent was this true, that only the founders had tickets, while, according to the phraseology of the invitation, the "lady of the house," and, likewise, "passing guests," had free entry. A like freedom prevailed in the friendly intercourse of the concert-room, and of this absence of ceremony considerable traces still remained even a hundred years later. Friendly visits were in order between the pieces; and at the main pause between the first and second parts of the programme, ladies and gentlemen all rose to their feet, and the animated conversation of the great audience was like the humming of a gigantic bee-hive. Reserved seats were not yet dreamed of. Whoso would have a place to his mind must be early on the ground, while there was still room for choice. On the day in question, the number of aspirants was unusually great, hence the crowd on the staircase before the opening of the doors; for the report had spread through the town that morning with lightning rapidity, that Moscheles, the most famous pianist and composer, the most noted veteran of the classical school, the master of legato playing, the leader and model of all the *virtuosi* whose skill had been so admired the past winter—that this great artist would favor the audience with a piano performance. We young folks were anxious to savor this delight to the uttermost, and so to sit that no motion of hand or finger should escape our notice.

Moscheles had but a few weeks before removed from London to Leipzig. His pupil and friend, Mendelssohn, had succeeded in getting him back to his native country, and securing, at the same time, the most distinguished professor for the conservatory of music, which he had just called into being.

It was not Moscheles' intention to appear as a pianist at public concerts; and so but few, and those few but rarely, had a chance to hear him. But on this day, R. Wehner, of Dresden, was on the programme of the seventh subscription concert, for a piano concerto. The very day before, certain insurmountable obstacles were discovered at the rehearsal; and to help the management out of a dilemma, and offer a pleasure to the cultivated audience at one stroke, Moscheles resolved to renounce the strict privacy he had contemplated, and appear in the young *virtuoso's* place.

In the execution of this exceptional act of amiable assistance and kindly consideration for others' wishes, the famous and petted artist was introduced to the circle of *dilettanti* in Leipzig. It can naturally not be our intention, to-day, when all the more important journals have sketched, with more or less detail, the life of the great man deceased, to limp lamely after with such biographical minutiae. We hope rather to make ample satisfaction to our readers in other ways,

when the posthumous notes of Moscheles, mentioned at the close of our article, shall be ready for publication. The object of our present remarks is simply to give a slight but detailed sketch of his character, and so to do justice, at least in a preliminary way, to this most excellent man; for Moscheles was not merely admired, he was beloved; and now, a quarter of a century after the days mentioned at the beginning of our sketch, we cannot but recognize that the same kindly, benevolent disposition has distinguished him his life through, and that scarcely any one could be found more anxiously intent on satisfying the justifiable wishes and claims of others. This ready consideration for others' peculiarities, was, throughout all the energy he manifested in other regards, a fundamental trait of his character.

On musical ground, too, this peculiarity came out strongly. Though educated in Vienna, amid all the influences of the classic epoch in the Danubian capital, he stoutly maintained the axiom that no artistic performance, either creative or executive, can afford to dispense with articulate and graceful form. In musical compositions, especially, he held correctness and beauty of artistic form, with clear expression of the composer's intention, to be the three main requisites of every good work. Besides this, his great teacher, Salieri, had always led him to avoid excess and exaggeration, and he was fond of relating an illustration of Salieri's manner of enforcing his counsels.

When, as a youth, he had submitted to his master a composition, in which he had been charged with the task of representing a young girl's sorrow at the death of her bird, and in which the budding composer had excitedly tried to give the impression of grief over the favorite's loss by a vigorous use of minor chords, Salieri struck out precisely the passage which the young musician thought the finest, saying, with a smile, "and what would you do if the whole city had burned down?"

That a composer who loved measure and beautiful form like Moscheles could never sympathise with the new direction in music, which we are accustomed to hear called its *future*, is evident; still, he thought it his duty to give close examination to every such new development, and attend the representations constantly, to avoid injustice to his contemporaries. And, with loving care, he managed to discover and to bring to notice everything really beautiful. The less we are used to see impartiality in art, the more rarely we find unprejudiced recognition accorded by one creative artist to another of differing or opposite tendency, so much the more should we admire this amiable *objectivity* which Moscheles always put in practise. It may be a half year ago that the writer of these lines, in conversation with him, declared the so-called "written music" of Beethoven's last quartette, spite of our recognition of its peculiar merit, a mistake, as composition is not meant for the eye but the ear.

"Granting that the composition of such quartettes is an error," was the master's answer, "Beethoven, at all events, was clear and sure enough in his course before that, but the imitators in this line of music had not been Beethoven first."

In this gentle fashion he condemned a tendency in art which would shake the foundations of all composition, if it should once get full swing.

The loss of this world-renowned instructor is the heavier loss to the Leipzig conservatory, that it is impossible to tell how and where to make it good; yet the institution is in pressing need. Moscheles had been fitted for his office by his efficiency as a *virtuoso*, and by thirty years of instruction in London. To his pupils he was a paternal friend, to many a helper in every difficulty, and to all a pattern, by his unsurpassed conscientiousness and his ready recognition of others' individuality.

This essentially staunch and genuine character, through all the gentleness of his external manifestation, made his way for him in England. The nobility of the heart gained the day. In him it was impossible not to recognize the born gentleman, and to him was granted, without opposition, what had been conceded to no other musician—he was, in good society, treated as a member, not a servant. Yet Moscheles was a son of the people. Little favored by fortune, but armed with a persistent will, with enduring power, and with a capacity for serious work, he conquered his place in life for himself.

While the development of men of intellectual prominence is often greatly promoted by maternal affection, Moscheles was not led by this motive to the study of music, but here again was quite independent.

From his mother he derived delicacy of perception, gentleness in judgment, pleasure in harmless jest—all qualities for which he was distinguished to his latest day, and which made his intimacy so delightful to his friends, by bridging over the gulf which not seldom existed between his own gifted character and that of his friends. It was his father whose example led Moscheles into the realm of harmony.

His father was a clothier in Prague, and obliged, in the course of business, to travel one or more times a year to Vienna. Returning, then, from the capital, which at that time was the supreme oracle in music, he brought back, in his budget of news for his wife and children, not only musical reminiscences, but also the latest musical publications. In the innocent fashion peculiar to the first decades of this century, these pieces, executed with piano, guitar, and voices, contributed to the pleasure and entertainment of the family or of their musically disposed friends. It was a pet notion of the father that one of his children should be distinguished in music. His choice fell on the eldest daughter, but she lacked alike talent and inclination. On one occasion, when she had stood the paternal examination ill, and failed to play the piece set her as a task, the storm of paternal wrath was on the point of breaking on her unlucky head, when the young brother compassionately averted his anger by crying out, "I can do it!"

The little six-year-old lad had heard his sister practise the piece so often that he knew it by heart, and at last practised it on the piano, by ear, for his own pleasure. From this time on, the instruction was, by common consent, transferred from his sister to himself. The words which opened to him the propylea of the art temple—the proud yet modest words, "I can do it"—he had frequent occasion to utter afterwards. He spoke them joyfully when, at thirteen years of age, he brought his father his first printed composition, a four-part song, as a present, on occasion of his birth-day festival. He spoke them sadly and earnestly, when, a few months after this confirmation of his father's hopes, the faithful eyes of his childhood's guide were closed in death, and the mother charged the lad to journey alone to far-off Vienna, to complete his musical education.

He spoke them courageously, when he, though still a child in years, was yet too proud to draw regular support from his mother, and trusted to his own strength and labor for subsistence. That business-like care and order in his affairs which his father taught him never deserted him through a long life. From the year 1818, till the time of his death, his ledger was kept without interruption; and its pages show that, soon after his arrival in Vienna, his composition lessons with Albrechtsberger began; while, almost at the same time, Moscheles himself began to give piano-forte lessons, and so to justify his words to his mother. By the following year his lessons were so sought after, that they not only brought him in the price (considerable for those times) of five florins the lesson, but that they also—as indicated by an item in the account-book—were taken under exceptional circumstances. The son of one Dr. Perger wished piano-forte instruction; his father hated music, and so nothing was left for the young aspirant but to take his lessons on the sly. When his father had got to bed, the son would slip out, at eleven, twice a week, and hurry to his equally enthusiastic teacher, with whom he would often stay, as if chained to the instrument, till gray dawn.

In the year 1809, Moscheles, now fifteen years old, was employed as chorus leader at the Kärntnerthor theater, while at the same time he was admired as a skilful pianist, and sought after by the music dealers for his able arrangements of favorite operatic airs. He had made his own way by his own strength and persevering labor. From that time on, the motto of his life was ever as before, those masterful words, "I can do it!"

Moscheles has bequeathed his diary, which he had kept from the earliest period down to within a few days of his death, to his son, now living, as a painter of repute, in London. The publication of these notes promises some interesting contributions to the history of art.

It is not the painting, gilding, and carving, that make a good ship; but if she be a nimble sailer, tight and strong to endure the seas, that is her excellence. It is the edge and temper of the blade that make a good sword, not the richness of the scabbard; and so it is not money or possessions that make a man considerable, but his virtues.